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France

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Avian Influenza : France Bans Outdoor Raising of Poultry in 21 Regions

2005

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Report Highlights:

The French Ministry of Agriculture announced on October 25 a ban on outdoor raising of poultry in 21 of 94 regions. These regions are deemed to be more vulnerable because either they are on the path of migratory birds or they have significant areas of lakes and dormant waters, which attract waterfowl. Shows and gatherings of live poultry and birds as well as the use of calling fowl for hunting are also prohibited. Anybody handling live or dead birds is also reminded to wear gloves. Those measures are to be enforced until at least December 1st at which time another risk assessment will be made. The ban on outdoor raising creates major problems for farmers producing premium free-range poultry. In France, close to 25 percent of chickens sold on retail markets are free-range chickens.

Includes PSD Changes: No

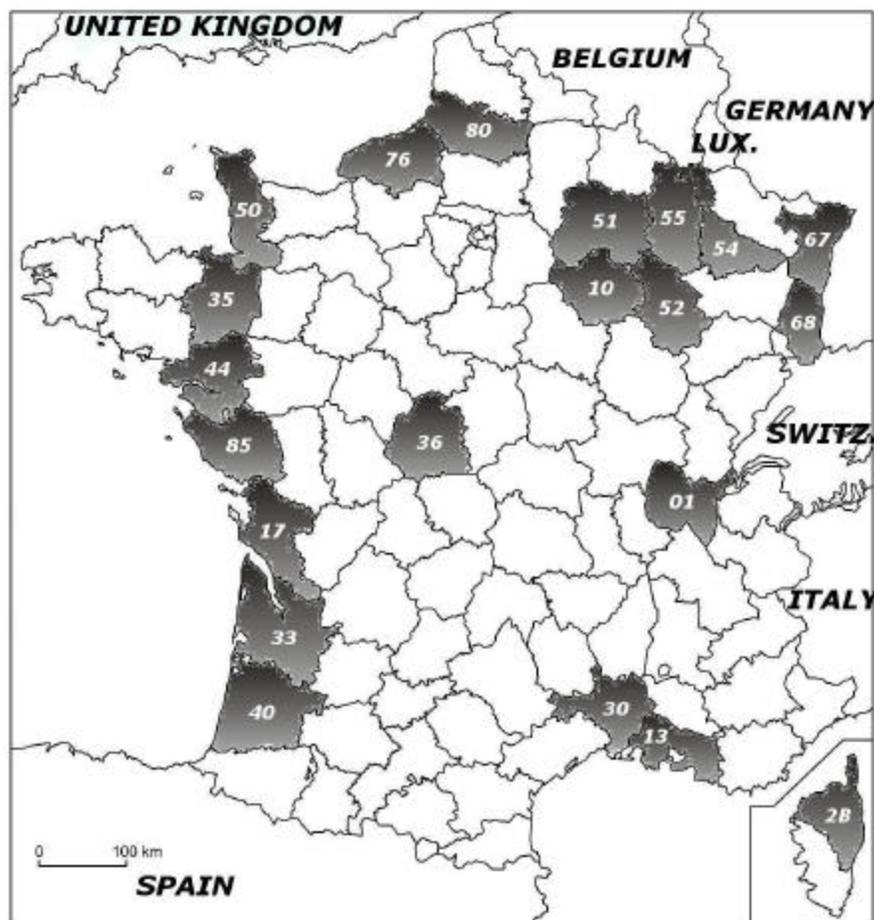
Includes Trade Matrix: No

Unscheduled Report

Paris [FR1]

[FR]

Following the confirmation of avian influenza cases in wild birds in Germany, the French Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries decided to ban outdoor poultry raising in 21 regions out of 94. Those regions (shown in the map below) are deemed more vulnerable because either they are on the path of migratory birds or they have significant areas of lakes and dormant waters, which attract waterfowl.



- 01 : Ain
- 10 : Aube
- 13: Bouches-du-Rhône
- 17 : Charente-Maritime
- 2B : Haute-Corse (Upper Corsica)
- 30 : Gard
- 33 : Gironde
- 35 : Ile-et-Vilaine
- 36 : Indre
- 40 : Landes
- 44 : Loire-Atlantique
- 50 : Manche
- 51 : Marne
- 52 : Haute-Marne
- 54 : Meurthe-et-Moselle
- 55 : Meuse
- 67 : Bas-Rhin
- 68 : Haut-Rhin
- 76 : Seine-Maritime
- 80 : Somme
- 85 : Vendée

For farms where it is neither suitable nor practicable to keep flocks indoors because of lack of buildings, feed and water must be kept indoors and extensive surveillance must be undertaken. Any suspicious death must be immediately reported to the local veterinary authorities.

Any gathering of live poultry and game birds at events such as agricultural fairs, game fairs, bird exhibitions and bird and poultry shows is prohibited in France. However, local authorities may allow such events on a case-by-case basis in places where the risk has been assessed and deemed minimal.

Use of calling fowl for hunting is also prohibited because of the increased risk of contact between wild birds and calling fowl. Hunters are requested to report the sighting of any dead birds to the local veterinary authorities. Farmers, hunters and anybody handling live or dead birds are also reminded to wear gloves.

These measures are to be enforced until at least December 1st where another risk assessment will be undertaken. It is believed that by that date, most migratory birds will have passed France.

The ban on outdoor raising creates major problems for farmers producing "Red Label" free-range poultry as well as for those producing premium Appellation of Origin "Volaille de Bresse" (poultry from the Bresse region grown specifically in the region of Ain). By law, such poultry must be raised free-range and it is yet not known if it may continue to benefit from its Red Label or Appellation because of the new restrictions. In France, close to 25 percent of chickens sold on retail markets are Red-Label chickens. Should they be forced to abandon such high quality labels, farmers may lose up to 50 percent of their selling price.